

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated February 25, 2004. Non-elected claims 5-6 have been canceled, without prejudice in view of the Restriction Requirement as applicant intends to file a divisional application directed toward method claims. Claims 1-4 are now pending.

Generally speaking, and for purposes of example and without limitation, certain example embodiments of this invention relate to a solid state camera device which includes a plurality of light-receiving parts arranged at a constant interval on a substrate, and a plurality of light-focusing parts disposed corresponding to each of the plurality of light-receiving parts. In order to correct shading, the position of each of the light-focusing parts is *shifted larger toward the center* of the camera region based on the position of the corresponding light-receiving part, and the *size* of the light-focusing part becomes *larger* in the direction along the substrate. As explained in the instant specification, it has been found that this surprisingly permits shading problems to be addressed and corrected.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Kato. This Section 102(b) rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 requires that "the position of each of the light-focusing parts is shifted gradually larger toward the center of the camera region based on the position of each of the light-receiving parts corresponding to the light-focusing parts and the size along the

substrate surface in the lateral direction of each of the light-focusing parts becomes gradually larger, as the location of the light-focusing part is getting closer to the peripheral camera region from the middle camera region on the substrate in the front of the exit pupil." In other words, the size of the lenses or light-focusing parts becomes gradually larger toward the periphery. The cited art fails to disclose or suggest the aforesaid underlined aspect of claim 1.

Kato fails to disclose or suggest that the size of the lenses or light-focusing parts becomes gradually larger toward the periphery as required by claim 1. Kato discloses a solid state imaging device including an array of light receiving parts 2 and a corresponding array of focusing microlenses 3 (e.g., col. 4, lines 54-57). Kato explains that the "shape" of the lenses may change moving toward the periphery, so that curvature and thus power of the lenses may be increased toward the periphery of the device (e.g., col. 3, lines 20-24; and col. 5, lines 47-51). However, Kato fails to disclose or suggest changing the size of the lenses to make them "larger" in size moving toward the periphery as required by claim 1. While Kato states that shape may change, there is no disclosure of making the size of the lenses larger in the lateral direction toward the periphery as required by claim 1.

Moreover, it will be seen that Kato actually teaches directly away from the invention of claim 1. In Kato, in order to increase curvature and thus the power of the lenses, the size of the lenses in Kato in the direction along the substrate would become smaller (the opposite of "larger" required by claim 1) moving toward the periphery, or the

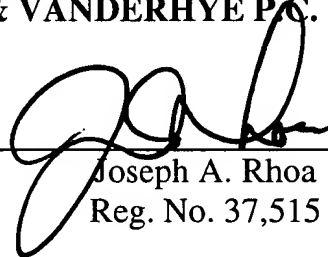
thickness would increase. Thus, it can be seen that Kato actually teaches the direct opposite of what claim 1 requires. Kato would change lens size by making lenses smaller toward the periphery, whereas the invention of claim 1 requires the opposite since it requires that the size of the lenses becomes larger toward the periphery. Kato is entirely unrelated to the invention of claim 1 in this regard.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that all rejections be withdrawn. All claims are in condition for allowance. If any minor matter remains to be resolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned with regard to the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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